

# TWENTY





# The Bell Tower Arts Journal

Volume 13  
2019 – 2020

## Editor

Regan Minkel

## Editorial Board

The editorial board for the journal is comprised of full-time faculty members from the Honors Program, the English Department, the Visual Communications Department, and the Fine Arts Department. The editorial board has the final approval on all selections and publication decisions.

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Ryan Soward  
Derrick White  
Torrey Wylie  
Kristine Kirst

## Selection Committee

The selection committee for The Bell Tower Arts Journal is comprised of student members from the English Department, the Visual Communications Department, the Art Department, and faculty advisors.

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### About the Title:

Just as the Bell Tower at Tyler Junior College chimes on the half hour to mark the passage of time, it reminds students of the harmony which surrounds them in their educational pursuits. Music, dance, theatre, art, athletics, and academics blend to make Tyler Junior College a beacon to the community, the state, and the world at large. As the echoes of the chords filter through the oaks, their vibrations tremble far beyond the confines of the brick archways and winding walks where students gather. Tyler Junior College is a lofty tower of educational opportunity for students who have come from all parts of the world. The Bell Tower Arts Journal proudly hails the accomplishments of its hallowed halls and beckons those who would seek both its traditions and the promise of tomorrow.

~ Judith Bateman, 2006

### Editorial Policy:

The Bell Tower Arts Journal is sponsored by the Psi Gamma Chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta, the National English Honor Society. We accept submissions of poetry, short fiction, non-fiction essays, photography, and fine and graphic art by current Tyler Junior College students. We accept submissions for consideration only during the fall semester each year for possible publication in the subsequent spring semester. The Bell Tower Arts Journal is entirely student generated and seeks to provide a publishing venue for the rich artistic expression of TJC students.

Our goal is to create a publication that is a high quality, content-rich source of literary and artistic expression on a wide range of topics and themes. Therefore, we seek unique, insightful work displaying vivid, lively language and artistic skill.

All submissions must be the original work of the student writer or artist who submits it for consideration or publication. We do not accept previously published or plagiarized work. Every attempt is made by the editor to assure originality. All literary pieces will be submitted to turnitin.com for an originality report. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of each student to submit only his or her own literary and artistic work.

Moreover, while we strongly support intellectual freedom as the right of every individual from all points of view, we do not accept work deemed pornographic, profane, exploitative, or that seeks to cause injury to an individual or group.

Tyler Junior College gives equal consideration to all applicants for admission, employment and participation in its programs and activities without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability or veteran status.

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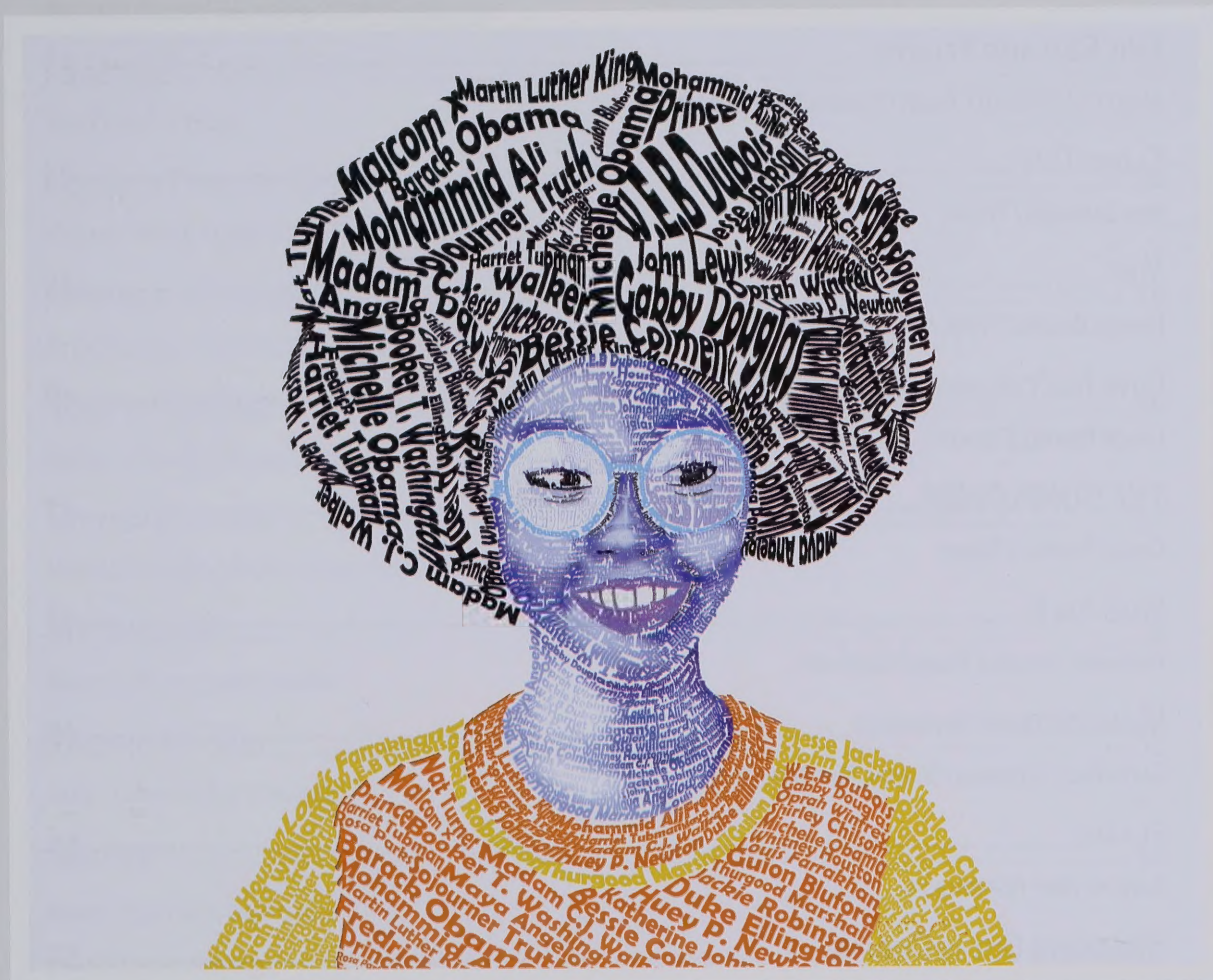


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## THE NAMES THAT MADE ME FREE

Amaya Blanton / Tyler / Photoshop





## SHORELINE SUNSET

Amaya Blanton / Tyler / Digital Photography



## Woe Is Me, Thanks Anxiety

You took all my power, and now it is gone.  
I was unwilling, being controlled like a forced pawn.  
The beauty within me I could no longer see.  
Scared, confused, and alone is where you left me.

Why did you choose me out of everyone?  
Hitting me with fear like a machine gun.  
I was so scared to even go outside,  
because I listened to you, even though I knew you lied.

Why all the confusion that you placed in my head?  
Why could I no longer believe what people had said?  
I know that I am the best I can be,  
So why do you have to mess with me?

You backed me in the corner so I was all alone.  
You instilled in me so much fear I stood like a stone.  
I knew I had all my family and friends,  
yet you left me like a candle burning at both ends.

But I learned to grow with the passage of time.  
I learned to know where I draw the line.  
All those lies I am able to withstand.  
Those bad thoughts blew over like sand.

I run and dance for now I am free  
from all the captivity you had in me.  
My wraith, I let you haunt me no more.  
Through my faith, I showed you the door.

-Alyssa Giordano / Lindale





UNTITLED

Lilyann Moreno / Tyler / Acrylic



## Dandelion Daydreams

Imagine if  
We stopped viewing  
Ourselves as delicate flowers  
That can be blown away by the wind  
Or crushed under the feet of those above us  
And realized we are more like the Oak Trees that  
Will withstand the strongest of storms; we are so far from

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But why  
Would they tell  
Us this, when the only  
Hope they have of containing  
Us is to make us feel like  
We are so easily  
Destroyed  
Like

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-Brittani Rainer / Tyler



## SUNFLOWER

I piled my life in boxes  
Left my heart on your sleeve  
I threw my wishes down a well  
Then told myself "Don't forget to breath."  
I drained the tears from my eyes  
Laid my mind down to sleep  
Took the fire from your lighter  
And burnt away my memories

Now they say I'm free  
But I've given up the best parts of me  
They're still chained to our history  
Lift my chin, draw a smile  
Hang me from the stem of a sunflower in your mind

You took my words like a shot  
Then chased them down with your lies  
Drew a halo on your pillow  
And tried to make me the bad guy  
You stuffed your hands in your pockets  
And crossed your fingers inside  
Told the world I was a coward  
And used my secrets to shade your crimes

Now they say I'm free  
But I've given up the best parts of me  
They're still chained to our history  
Lift my chin, draw a smile  
Hang me from the stem of a sunflower in your mind

-Brittani Rainer / Tyler



## Devil

I met the devil in a cafe when I was 18  
She was working at the counter  
I would sing there twice a week  
She told me stories of tomorrow  
Of the person I could be

So I gave her all my moments  
And was her favorite secret to keep  
She locked me in her garden  
Planted in the shade  
She pulled at all my petals  
And I thanked her for the pain

I wrote her into stanzas  
Sang her to the crowds  
Cotton sheets and nicotine  
Were our common ground

The problem with the Devil  
Was she is known for games  
While I was falling quickly  
She held a steady gaze  
Then she told me that she loved me  
But she loved him still the same  
I let her cry upon my shoulder  
And promised never to fall again

I left the Devil when I was 20  
Broken hearted and ashamed  
Because the Devil was my true love  
But I was simply a passing phase

-Brittani Rainer / Tyler





## PORT OF BROWNSVILLE '96

Makayla Mahloch / Tyler / Mixed Media





ONE OR THE OTHER  
Makayla Mahloch / Tyler / Mixed





WELL, I'M GONNA LET YOU GO NOW, OKAY?

Makayla Mahloch / Tyler / Ink & Paper



## St. Michael's Wings

I left these East Texas pines in 19 and 39  
Headed out to the coast line of Caroline  
I learned how to fly by jumping from the sky  
I landed in Normandy just waiting around to die  
Oh, but don't you know I'm no hero,  
but I know right where they go

Ain't it funny how time moves slow  
until it learns to fly, and then all it does is pass you by?  
So I guess it's left right left just stay in step  
Left right left seems to be the only thing left in me

I wake up every day in 1943  
I wonder to myself how this came to be  
My jump boots shining  
My parachute behind me  
GO, GO, GO  
Time moves slow  
Then my knees are in the breeze  
searching for the enemy in the trees  
just left right left 'till the toll bell rings  
And all the paratroopers sing  
carry him on St. Michael's wings

All my buddies rest in peace  
me, I still fight for sleep  
I dream of 1943 and I see  
the men I haven't seen in ages  
It's still left right left stay in step  
I'm awake and have nothing left to give

I came home to a world I could not recognize  
I didn't even know the man behind my eyes  
Follow me, I'll lead the way  
That's the last thing a ranger will say  
As left right left turns into tomorrow  
know, my son, time is only borrowed

Well, dad, I made it  
I got wings on my chest  
They say I can fly



They say a paratrooper never dies  
Just learns how to guard the sky  
Won't be here long I'm off to Saigon

I sit here and think about the time we shared  
The stories of 43 come rushing back to me  
Glad you made it home when you did  
Hope I can do the same, if not, old man,  
take care of my boys, treat them well  
let it be known That War is Hell

But a paratrooper never dies  
Just learns how to guard the sky  
So on St. Michael's wings I shall fly  
Follow me, I'll lead the way

My grandad raised me out in East Texas  
where men go to work or they go to war  
He should know, he was there in 43 and 44  
My dad did the same in 75  
It's funny, I can't remember him alive  
Just some dog tags and a flag, that's all that remains  
My grandad did the best he could  
So here I stand, 3 generations of fighting men

I left these East Texas pines and headed for Caroline  
I learned how to fly jumping from the sky  
I landed in the desert just waiting around to die  
Oh, but don't you know I'm no hero,  
but I know right where they go

Shannon was a good kid and we buried him in Virginia  
Aaron's laid down in Tucson, Arizona  
Steven's in Ohio, and, Oh, don't you know  
Omar's halo is laid low down by the Alamo

Them boys all rest in peace  
but me, I still fight for sleep  
Just left right left 'till the toll bell rings  
And all the paratroopers sing  
carry him on St. Michael's Wings

-Rocky Hall / Tyler





## UNTITLED

Amanda Parks / Tyler / Acrylic & Ink





UNTITLED

Amanda Parks / Tyler / Acrylic & Ink

## Breathe

Someone once told me,  
"Anxiety is like having depression for the future."  
Constantly having something on your mind,  
yet you have no reason to be in a bind.  
Reciting conversations over and over again in your head,  
already trying to plan ahead.

Receiving a text of "I have to talk to you."  
Your heart starts racing,  
and you can't stop shaking.  
You're five days, six months, ten years into the future.  
You're becoming so anxious, it's creating a tumor.

But remember today is not even over.  
Stop treating each day as if you're hungover.  
Anxiety can rob you from feeling your best.  
Just try to relax and get some rest.

How about we take it one day at a time,  
and try our hardest not to treat it like a crime.  
Because right now is here,  
and tomorrow may not even be near.

And I know what you're thinking; you're not alone.  
For this can be our stepping stone.  
We can get through it together.  
Just hold my hand,  
and remember this poem.  
It was written to make you feel better.

-LaKyndra Larkin / Flint





## UNTITLED

Barry Jacobs / Tyler / Acrylic Paint





## TRIPPY MOUNTAINS

Kacy Moore / Tyler / Acrylic & Sharpie





## CRASH

Kacey Moore / Yantis / Acrylic

## Art Department

Why do I love the art department a TJC?  
Because I can leave all my troubles at the door  
I can release all of my creativity in such a beautiful way  
I can be whoever I want to be  
I can be free to create whatever I want to create  
I can be myself without wearing a mask  
I can slip into any class and see students creating  
I can hear Paul making jokes  
I can be challenged by Chance  
I can be encouraged by Dave  
I can be absolutely amazed by Philana  
I can feel the love from Paula  
I can feel completely at home in a room of strangers  
I can be a part of something so special  
I can feel safe  
I can be excited to have my art critiqued  
I can feel comfortable around all the art professors  
I can ask advice on any subject  
Although Derrick White ruined my life, he also saved it  
He taught me that  
Through my art  
I can be me

-Megan Gray / Lindale





## DUALITY: THE LAST UNICORN

Amanda Allen / Jacksonville / Photoshop

## I See You

As my eyes moved across the warmly lit room, I gazed at the people dancing and laughing as they celebrated a new marriage. My eyes happened upon you, and I was intrigued by your mannerisms. I could feel your love and excitement illuminating from your smile as you looked around. It was fascinating to see you engrossed by all the festivities and people. I noticed you were nestled behind a supportive beam, intently listening to all the excitement surrounding you. It was as if the beam was your mother's leg, and you were her child, peering out from behind her loving protection.

The first thing I noticed about you was your self-conscious positioning. You stood with your feet shyly crossed, and your hands safely around a wine glass. At times, you leaned into the towering beam so she could give you comfort. However, when the wedding attendees started dancing, I saw you move ever so slightly from her side. You appeared lost in the moment, not fully aware that you had left the beam's faithful embrace. You gently swayed back and forth to the music, relishing the complete bliss that filled the air. As the song ended, so did your burst of confidence, and you dashed back to the beam's refuge.

~~I focused next on what you were wearing. Your navy-blue dress was fitted on the bodice~~ and flared out from your waist down. It had embroidered white flowers that came to life as you swayed. The flowers moved like they were being touched by a warm spring breeze. When I glimpsed at your small frame and short stature, it reminded me of a little girl who wanted to twirl around in her beautiful new dress, but had been warned not to.

I then caught a glimpse of your eyes. It wasn't their deep blue color that struck me, but it was the fact that they overflowed with want and hope. I felt your desire to take part in all the fun as your eyes cried, "Choose me. Please want me. Invite me. Accept me." The merriment carried on all around you, but you still felt alone. You then pressed yourself into the lofty beam, and it was as if she sensed your despair. She softly cradled your head, and I could hear her whisper words of reassurance to you.

As you continued to rest your head on the beam, I observed your hair. Your bangs were those of a young child; they framed your small face. The length was to the middle of your back and appeared recently dyed to a lighter blonde. However, I could see your gray roots peeking through, as if they wanted everyone to know your age. They were proud of all the life they had seen, and they didn't understand why they were not a source of pride to you.



The last thing that caught my attention was your smile. It was not a typical smile, but I found great beauty and interest in it. When you smiled, your cheeks raised with excitement and your eyes twinkled with delight. Strangely, you never opened your mouth to use your teeth to smile. Somehow, I found this fitting. Your smile revealed so much about you. It displayed the wonderment of a child, and at the same time, it disclosed just how vulnerable you really are.

As my gaze started to move through the lively room of people, I glanced back at you one more time. You were standing with your head tilted sideways while you moved faintly to the music with a doting smile. You then leaned your shoulder into the enormous beam, as if to share this most magical moment with her. Then, she delicately swaddled you with her strength, and in that instance, I could tell that her peace was surrounding you. I heard her softly say to you, "You will always be wanted, and you are most definitely invited."

-Niki Farley / Tyler



## HORSE'S POINT OF VIEW

Hillary White / Longview / Digital Photography



## A Father's Prayer

Little child of endless wonder  
wander farther than your father.  
Test the boundaries you've been given.  
Know the reason they were placed and  
boldly strike out past these boundaries.  
While you learn they keep you safest,  
Yet, once mastered, they will bind you.  
Head held high without a shackle,  
leave my side and with my blessing  
live a life of endless wonder.

-Kyle Halberstadt / Flint



## LOST IN THOUGHT

Nohely Bustos / Tyler / Acrylic





**GIRL OF CULTURE**  
Nohely Bustos / Tyler / Mixed Media

## My Beloved

on this day,  
this phenomenal day of all days,  
i stay before you and i pray  
i stand before you in praise  
i promise, i vow  
to honor and love  
to stand and to bow  
in a dress as white as a dove  
in sickness, in health  
i'll show care,  
in poorness, in wealth,  
i'll always be there,  
yes, i'll always be faithful to thee  
and not even death shall part you from me

-Mary Lodatto Kay / Gilmer



## Finding My Way

i sat in the fire,  
wearing my old attire,  
~~lost and found,~~  
held and bound.

i looked around,  
from the spot where i'm bound,  
i glanced at the places,  
where there are no longer faces.

i saw and i see,  
i know where to be,  
but i know not how to get,  
to the place where i'm meant.

-Mary Lodatto-Kay / Gilmer

## The Prey

my tongue is the shark in the waters  
that hasn't fed in weeks  
the snake that wears a camouflage  
of being nice to you

my soul bleeds like the hungry,  
cursed path that craves to be  
stepped on

my voice is of a soft,  
beautiful prey,  
but it is the soft, beautiful owl  
that hunts the ravenous kitten

and it is i that am  
hunting you, my precious prey,  
not the other way around

-Mary Lodatto Kay / Gilmer





DOVE AND SWAN  
Tessa Ramirez / Alba / Digital Media



## LOVE

Jaylynn Gray / Tyler / Digital Photography





## UNDER THE LIGHT

Jaylynn Gray / Tyler / Digital Photography

## The Messenger (in my dreams)

"I am old as time;  
these eyes have seen the good  
and dastardly ways of humanity.

I have witnessed the undoing of family ties;  
the slaying of blood for crowns of pride, privilege and power.

I plead to you,  
hear these words of exhortation;  
let your sins stand still.

For the seasons will change  
and the deep will dry.  
I shall weep for you;  
these tears will sear  
the nation with spirit of sorrow.

O' beautiful ones,  
tainted with such profanity;  
I weep for you . . .  
for your suffering is yet to come."

-LaDedra Starks / Tyler



## STRONG WOMAN

In the name of justice, she fights.  
Uniting her own with words,  
spoken and through song.

She will not be silenced.

Her voice is so strong  
that it breaks barriers,  
and when she is in motion  
she changes the world.

-LaDedra Starks / Tyler



## BLEEDING BLUE

Leyton Williams / Mineola / Photoshop



## the thing about kids

I am not a grown-up.

I lie on the floor and I think about dragons and

I give names to action-figures and make them argue about food.

I tilt my chair backwards and I read picture-books and I forget my chores

because more important things had to be done—of course naming  
teddy bears is important!

And sometimes I wander barefoot just so my feet will be dirty, and so the grass  
can get stuck between my toes. Maybe the blackberries are ripe now?

I wrap myself in a cloak against the cold. It doesn't help, but I'm a warrior in it.

-Hannah Shackelford / Sulphur Springs



## LIFE IN THE FORK

Marly Guerrero / Tyler / Digital Photography





## EVIL RED AND YELLOW

Marly Guerrero / Tyler / Digital Photography

## Close Out

The grocer—a large, balding fellow wearing a white apron—stood behind the counter as the elderly couple strolled into his small store which was well known for gourmet and unusual food. He called them Mr. and Mrs. Smith and they visited often, most days purchasing nothing. The grocer assumed it was a recreational outing for them. As they peered into the cold box and poked around the shelves, they spoke softly to each other, strolling hand in hand. Mr. Smith smiled and greeted the grocer, saying, “Anything good come in this weekend?”

“Pretty much the usual,” the grocer replied. “Would you like to take a look at our new items? On the top shelf of the cold box I have a good supply of despair and depression. It’s best simmered all day and served with a sauce of hopelessness. My customers love these products. Once they try them, they come back time after time.”

Not interested, the couple examined the display next to the soft drink cooler which housed a supply of carbonated climate change and fizzy helplessness. On a shelf nearby, they found a can of freeze-dried nuclear weapon. The serving instructions suggested a side dish of kimchi for authentic Korean flavor.

As they examined the snack and sweets aisle, the Smith’s encountered high energy pestilence and chronic illness with artificial sweetener. Sighing, the grocer spoke to his bearded partner, the butcher, saying, “The old folks spend a lot of time exploring the store, but they never buy anything that’s exciting or newsworthy. Usually some little something on a bottom shelf.”

The butcher, in his bloodstained apron, didn’t reply. Both men stood motionless while the couple ambled around the store, lifting items, discussing each one and replacing it.

“Look,” Mrs. Smith said, her blue eyes shining, as she bent low to examine a dusty, neglected corner, “I think I’ve found just what I’ve been wanting. I haven’t seen this since I was a child.”

As he followed her gaze, the man spied two small cans with faded labels and replied, “Well, I’ll be.” Both items were on clearance due to lack of interest. With difficulty, the Smith’s stooped to reach the lowest shelf, where the cans sat, neglected, in a corner. Helping each other up, they proceeded to the register to pay.

As he bagged their purchases, the grocer heard Mrs. Smith say to her husband, “I have the can of hope and you have the joy. Do you want to trade?”

“No, Dear, let’s share.”

Mr. Smith took his wife’s arm and, as they walked away, the butcher shook his head. He knew there’d be no new shipment of hope and joy. There was simply no market for it. Love had been discontinued several months back. But, he thought the couple might be well supplied with love. Both merchants returned to their daily tasks while the “All News. All the Time” television station continued to blare on the wall above the checkout counter.

-Iris Jackson / Tyler





You

Hanna Baron / Tyler / Graphite Pencils

## Love Isn't Always True

The first time I met you was the first time I felt alive.  
You set my soul ablaze with just the look in your eyes.  
We came from different worlds that should have never collided,  
but loving you is what my heart had already decided.

You gave me hope I had found something that was a rarity,  
a unique love that I believed would give my life clarity.  
So I unshackled my heart and laid it gently in your hands,  
not knowing that it would slip through your fingers like quicksand.

And it was only when my heart was in a puddle on the floor  
that you looked at me, turned around, and walked out the door.  
I cried out your name as I watched you in retreat,  
falling to my knees, utterly broken in my defeat.

I could choose to be like you and never care about another soul,  
never feeling pain again because my heart is black as coal.  
But in the end, I would rather be broken from loving too much  
than to be alone like you because I never loved enough.

-Chloe Powell / Troup



## THE SUNFLOWER

She had a smile that was more radiant than the sun  
Her beautiful green eyes were truly the windows to her soul  
As far as anyone comparing to her, there, of course, were none  
For if life were a show, then she was born to be the lead role

Her laugh melted your heart like ice cream on a warm summer day  
Her kindness was sweeter than a thousand cans of peace tea  
When you needed a friend, no one knew better than her what to say  
The unconditional love that she shared was far deeper than any sea

She had a fire within her that made her shine brighter than any star  
Fear was never an option for her, even when faced with the darkest of nights  
Her determination ran deep in her veins, to the point that it was almost bizarre  
She was simply the girl who dared to dream, and always kept her future in sight

Now that she's gone, it feels like the world is in the midst of its darkest hours  
She saved me by showing me the purest love of a lifetime  
Even though the Lord called home that precious yellow sunflower,  
I thank Him every day for allowing that beautiful angel to be a friend of mine

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ALYSSA DAWN BAKER  
APRIL 20, 2018

-Chloe Powell / Troup



## Who Am I?

Aveanne Tugano / Tyler / Charcoal





**MANGOSTEEN HARVEST**  
Catia Bell / Lindale / Digital Photography

## Flame

Have you ever watched a fire?  
Watched it spread; watched it consume?  
At times, it seems to think  
Hunger  
At times, it seems more than a force of nature  
It seems  
Alive

Have you ever watched someone burn  
From the inside?  
Have you ever watched someone take on  
Everything  
When they can't even handle their own flame?  
But they keep taking and taking  
They keep trying and trying  
All while they burn

I remember the feeling of love  
And of being loved  
It seems more like a distant memory now  
It's all burned away

All I feel is hollow

I remember when I felt butterflies  
They feel more like ash in my lungs  
Suffocating me under the pressure

I remember when I felt joy  
That yellow paint coating my heart  
Now it's all red and black  
Muddled



I remember feeling love  
Feeling important  
Wanted  
Now all I feel is anxiety  
Disgust  
At myself, at my fire

I just wanted to have someone  
To share with  
To share my small flame with  
To share the weight  
But I took on his flame  
And piece by piece  
His flame fed mine  
Turned it into an inferno

Now all I feel is the flame  
The rage  
The anger  
And then  
The emptiness

My insides aren't twisted  
Not anymore  
Now they're withered

Now they're burnt

Have you ever watched someone burn  
From the inside?

-Kaitlyn Vest / Garrison

## Sneaking Out in Dublin

Slowly, I opened the door and proceeded with extreme caution so as to not disturb the others in the hostel. I burst out of the lobby door and began my secret trek. A soft wind caressed the dirty sidewalks. Yellowish light fell dimly from buzzing street lamps onto the aged street. Fear solicited my mind to submit to the possibility that anything could lay just around the corner; I continued my stroll along the streets of Dublin, Ireland in naivety. Corner after corner, bridge after bridge. Thoughts of crime rates and news articles poured through my mind as I continued my journey. But, I had to find it.

In an air of silence, I traversed the byways of the city attempting to go unnoticed by the large population of homeless individuals that often patrol the streets. The aged stone gargoyles that sat upon the pillars of ancient cathedrals peered upon me as I scurried through the streets in a determined angst. Climbing atop an arched bridge, I paused. Curiously, I scanned the skyline in search of my target. Identifying a lead, I was accompanied by the soft sound of water flowing through the River Liffey that divided the city.

"Hey, you." I heard a man whisper softly from the darkness of an alley. Alarmed, I walked faster in the opposite direction, my mind feverishly fighting off the regret of coming out here all alone. I noted the location of a phone booth as I continued through the old city in case something were to go wrong. The stars looked down on me through the thick smog. Startled by my presence, a raccoon disappeared into an alley as I passed by the putrid trash bin that he had been scavenging. I started to worry that maybe I was not the only one on the streets at this hour.

I began to clip along at a steady jog as I rounded the corner onto O'Connell Street. "Oh my gosh!" I exclaimed to myself while coming to an abrupt stop. There it was: The Spire of Dublin. Standing in its still and radiant glory, the top of the pin-like monument peered over the city from one hundred and twenty meters in the sky. I began to breathe a bit deeper as I approached the dynamic beauty. Relief swept over my mind as I gazed upon the structure through the moonlit smog.

After a few minutes of taking it all in, I approached the base of the monument to find the famous geocache slots that I had read about for years. I carefully placed a poem I had written in the slot and then closed it quietly. I strolled calmly back to the hostel, slowly retracing my route. I had accomplished what I came here to do. Just as I started from my room in the hostel and traversed the city to find this place, my poem started out in my mind and ended up where I want all of my art to go: In Spire.

-Jeremy Wilson / Crockett





## DOWNTOWN TYLER

Ally Poland / Kingwood / Photoshop

## King of the Hill

In the valley, creatures prowl.

Those that eat green:  
deer, squirrels, and mice.

Those that eat meat:  
coyotes, wolves, and the owl.

But no predator comes near the Green Hill.

On Green Hill, a solitary tree.

The tree provides.

In the rain, dry earth.

In the snow, shelter and warmth.

In the heat, shade.

A stream flows around the base,

and the tree drops fruit,  
feeding plant and beast.

The animals find strength,  
strength in numbers there,  
and no predator dare approach.

But no peace lasts,  
and no king reigns  
forever.

From the mountains  
came a storm and with lightning.

The tree was brought down.

Fire left the Green Hill black.

No creature stirs there.

The tree is dead and hollow,  
and the owl builds his nest among the boughs.

From his perch, he can see  
what no creature knows.

That within the hollow trunk  
a sapling is sprouting.

-Jonathan DeClerck / Tyler





## COLOR FLOW

Laura Caviness / Sulphur Springs / Acrylic



## truth

I just want to tell the truth.

To say, "I like you."

"I love you."

"No tomatoes, please."

and, "This is who I am."

I just want to tell the truth,

to open my heart and tell you I'm allergic to cashews.

To share my art with you and not care if you like it or not.

To whisper your name and laugh when you whisper mine.

I just want to tell the truth,

to stand before you with my naked face of wonder

and my awkward stance of empty hands and heart,

to fall to my knees and weep before you like shame itself.

I just want to tell the truth,

that I am cold and have silver streaks on my arms and thighs,

that I am still in love with every boy I've loved before -

that I have so many urges to leap, to turn, to fall and to fly

that I've never been loved in a way I like.

{I just want to tell the truth,

to love you with it and wrap it around you like a shroud.

To tell you I'll hold you, feed you, drive you crazy,

that you have a smudge on your nose I'll wipe off for you.

To say, once and for all, Nothing; but still have you Know.}

-Hannah Shackelford / Sulphur Springs







A dense, black and white collage featuring the words "TWENTY", "TOWER", and "BELL" in various fonts, sizes, and orientations. The collage includes stylized geometric shapes like a hexagon and a circle, and a small logo for "TJC" at the bottom center.